The Black Cat

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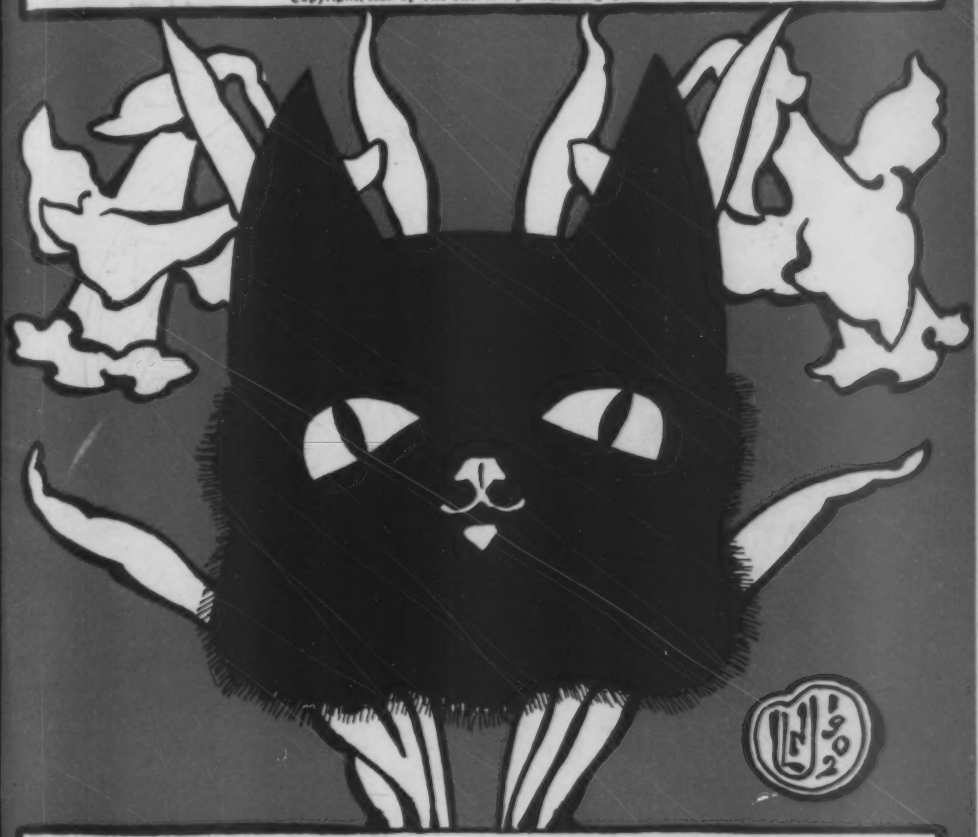

MAY 1902

A Professional Vampire.
Claire K. Alden.
As an Officer and a Gentleman.
Holman Day.
The Girl in Gray.
Alexander Black.
Old Joe's Grubstake.
Edith King Latham.
The Blizzard.
H. B. Alexander.

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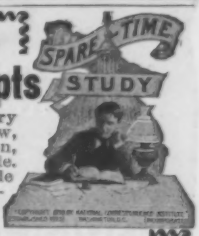

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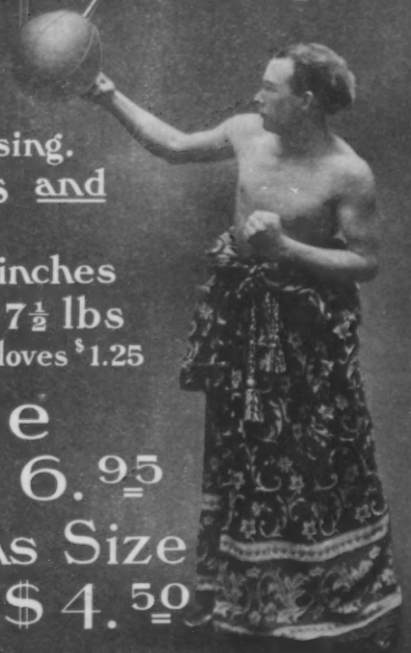

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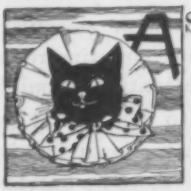
A Professional Vampire.*

BY CLAIRE K. ALDEN.



AS one of the vast army of solitary women, equally destitute of family, friends and funds, Hope Strong had to make her choice between the competing charms of music, matrimony, the stage, school-teaching, art and affairs, and electing the latter, had taken a course of study in an institution promising its pupils an acquaintance with actual business from the start. So perfectly was this promise fulfilled that when she had finally mastered all the commercial lore that its curriculum had to offer, her education received its finishing touch by a short but decisive course in bankruptcy — not simulated, like the more prosperous transactions of the college, but the real thing. In a word, the institution failed and closed its doors.

Book-keeping had seemed to her to comprehend the essence of business principles, and to this branch she had chiefly devoted her attention. But, thrust into the actual battle of life, she found, much to her surprise, that the number of competent book-keepers in search of employment far exceeded the number of employers desiring such services on any terms, and after a discouraging search she was glad to content herself with a position as cashier in a small lunch

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room, known to its patrons as "The Hole in the Wall." Though small, it was crowded at all hours, at the time when Hope Strong took charge of its till, and her active fingers were kept busy all day and far into the evening in making change in its interests, while her nimble tongue responded to the more or less airy persiflage of its patrons. Her zeal was undoubted, yet in six months, for some unaccountable reason, the patronage had fallen off to such an extent that the proprietor was forced out of business, with the loss of his entire investment.

Meanwhile, Miss Strong had attracted the favorable notice of a small retail merchant who lunched hurriedly every day at the "Hole." His shoe business had so increased that the slate of his primitive beginnings no longer sufficed, and a professional bookkeeper had become indispensable; and, learning that Hope held a certificate of the highest proficiency in that science, he engaged her the day following the failure of the restaurant.

Here at least was an opening commensurate with her justifiable ambition, and so she applied herself to the task with assiduity, soon relieving her employer of all concern about counting-room affairs. He was thus enabled to give his whole attention to building up his trade, which responded perversely to his efforts by decreasing in an alarming manner, as was plainly shown by the beautifully formed figures on his books; and the more he exerted himself to increase it the smaller it became, until he was finally driven into bankruptcy.

His assignee pronounced Miss Strong's set of books and financial statement the neatest and most accurate that he had ever seen in the course of a somewhat lengthy experience with moribund business concerns, and his eulogium upon her business capacity, uttered at the first meeting of creditors, so impressed the representative of the great shoe manufacturing concern to which the bankrupt firm was chiefly indebted that he engaged her as one of an increased office staff made necessary by the recent erection of an additional factory building.

In the spacious, quiet offices of the mammoth shoe factory, so different from the petty concerns to whose methods she had been accustomed, Hope Strong had considerable leisure. She perceived that it was by a thorough knowledge of stenography and typewrit-

ing, as well as of book-keeping, that advancement to such desirable places as confidential secretary or business manager might be hoped for, and she accordingly devoted much time to further perfecting herself in those respects. The result of her zeal and industry was inevitable.

The failure of the manufacturers of The Peerless Shoe for Women for $675,000 was not soon forgotten in the leather district. Before its affairs were effectually wound up — though never to go again — Hope Strong had, as usual, fallen upon both nattily Peerless shod feet behind the grille-work of a widely-known Trust Company, charged with undertaking the shoe company's obsequies.

Her leisure — becoming more ample as she rose in the business world — was largely devoted to literature during her stay with the Trust Company. Poems, tales and sparkling essays upon social subjects sped from her talented pen with the rapidity and precision of projectiles from a Gatling gun. Nor were the results dissimilar. Publications accepting her articles entered forthwith into financial difficulties as into a battle, and papers to which she contributed regularly tottered to their fall.

The disastrous suspension of the Bicontinental Trust Company was, as every one knows, universally attributed to the panic of 1893, but Hope Strong was forced to admit to herself that the true reason was a far different one. As she reviewed her varied career in the clear, cold light of self-knowledge, and, in her methodical counting-house way, set down on the debit side of her account with Business the failure of half a dozen highly prosperous concerns, ranging from a lunch counter to a colossal fiduciary institution, and embracing two weekly newspapers and at least one prominent magazine, it dawned upon her that she had been, all unconsciously, waving a destructive wand over all these enterprises, and that she was, through some mysterious agency of mere personality a devouring vampire, instead of the helpful assistant she had hoped and striven to be.

An unusually tender New England conscience, aroused to action by this appalling discovery, now cried aloud, calling upon her to desist. She listened to its mandates and made no effort to secure work, which, indeed, does not come uninvited to the unemployed immediately after a financial crash.

But when the small amount saved from her earnings was nearly exhausted, the question of ways and means became such a pressing one that Necessity won in the fierce struggle with Conscience. Why, after all, should she not profit, as the specialists in every line profit, by their peculiar gifts? Why not feed on the meat that to others was poison?

The more she dwelt upon the idea the more it possessed her, and the result was that the last of her money was employed to secure the insertion of the following card in the local papers:

> PROFESSIONAL VAMPIRE.
>
> A WOMAN, peculiarly gifted with the capacity to wreck business or financial schemes and cast a blight over life in general, desires to widen her sphere of baleful influence. Avail yourself of this exceptional opportunity to punish your enemies, business or social. Numerous undoubted testimonials shown in the bankruptcy records of the past few years. Address "Vampire," this office.

One insertion of this unique advertisement sufficed to establish Hope Strong in her new calling, for she was compelled to use a dress-suit case to carry away the bushel of letters it evoked. All the world flocked as usual to one who claimed the possession of superlatively malignant powers. Thereafter the sign at her door was sufficient to bring a throng of those with enemies to punish — tall and short, stout and lean, men, women and others scarcely more than children — each with a grievance which a tardy Providence had failed to redress. She was kept busy day and night.

While snatching a hasty sandwich during business hours one day some time after embarking upon her new and lucrative career, the Professional Vampire was interrupted by a knock, followed by the abrupt entrance of a young man, neatly attired and wearing a close-cropped, pointed beard. Even without the instrument bag carried in one hand, such a trained physiognomist as Hope Strong would have easily diagnosed her visitor at once as a doctor. That a physician should feel impelled to go outside his own profession for means to blight human life was surprising to the Vampire, but not, apparently, so surprising as the effect which her appearance made upon him.

"You wreck a human life!" he exclaimed, when she had finally succeeded in identifying herself with the maleficent monster he

had come in search of. "Nonsense! Why, such a mite of an innocent child couldn't wreck a raw oyster!"

"Indeed!" replied the Vampire, with the just indignation of a misprized artist. "Just look over my press-notices, please. Read these slips from the Clipping Bureau — all my own cases, I assure you — those I have sent to the divorce and bankruptcy courts, the insane asylum and the grave. 'Couldn't wreck a raw oyster,' you think? My dear sir, I was born a moral vampire, and I can ruin any person upon whom I concentrate my influence."

"It was a girl" — the Doctor said at length, after duly weighing the Vampire's assurances — "a girl, fair like yourself, who undertook a little amateur vampire business in trying to wreck my life — by jilting me. I was engaged to be married to her, and between me and my wedding day there stood nothing but the trifling obstacle of an income which I looked forward with reasonable confidence to overcoming in the course of a year or two. But she was ever of a hasty and impetuous nature and — to be brief — she was married yesterday to a hated competitor who by dint of practices that it would be unprofessional in me to adequately describe is rolling, in a limited sense, in the gold that has so far been denied me. Now, if some disaster could be arranged to overtake this unworthy pair, I should regard no fee within reason as excessive."

Hope could not help noticing as the doctor talked that the bereavement he had experienced had by no means blinded him to the charms of her sex. Through the studious bedside manner that he professionally maintained there shone a warm personal appreciation of her attractions, and she secretly rejoiced in a pleasant consciousness of being particularly well groomed and becomingly adorned. In this expansive mood she readily undertook his commission.

"I shall have to visit these people of course," she stated. "You must furnish me with their address and a few points as to their habits and tastes. I will undertake the rest. Her picture is in that locket on your watch-guard, I suppose."

The Doctor, blushing, handed it to her. She noted with a smile of approval that the photograph of the jilt was not nearly as good-looking as herself.

As he was about to go, the Doctor paused on the threshold.

"Are you quite sure that, in employing you, I shall not also fall under your blighting influence?" he hesitatingly inquired. "I'm just building up a very good practice."

"That is your own risk," answered the Vampire coolly. "None of my clients has ever seemed to consider that possibility. However, I will resign the case, if you wish."

"Oh, no, indeed!" he hurriedly exclaimed; "do not desert me now. I feel that I need your services. There is something in the atmosphere of this room — something in your very presence — that breathes hope. I wish your occupation were not so obnoxious. Personally, I should like to cultivate your acquaintance."

"Beware!" said the Vampire, mischievously, pointing to her sign, a seething cauldron, inscribed, "Double, double, toil and trouble." "The less you have to do with a witch the better. Still, in a professional way, I shall be obliged to see you occasionally. Come next Thursday, say, and I will report progress."

But Doctor More did not wait till the appointed time. It was not later than the following Tuesday evening — after the Vampire's office-hours — that he called. Hope Strong received him with some trepidation. She would have to admit that she had accomplished little. She had visited his rival in the character of a patient, and during her visit the Doctor had cut himself severely with a surgical knife and a second-story worker had taken advantage of the ensuing confusion to rifle his wife's dressing-table of all her jewels, but beyond these trifles nothing had been done.

Doctor More noticed her nervousness and depression.

"Put on that golf cape," he said, in his authoritative, professional manner, "and come out for a walk. You need exercise in the open air, and you must allow me to prescribe."

Hope demurred.

"It's all very well to prescribe," she said, "but a physician is not expected to administer his remedies personally."

"Nevertheless, you will permit me to superintend the cure I have recommended," replied the Doctor, taking her hands in a mock struggle over the cloak.

"What tiny hands!" he pursued. "Why did not Providence deal me a hand like that?" And he sighed significantly.

Hope Strong laughed. The walk proved very pleasant. She

forgot her baleful profession, her failure and disappointment — everything. When she remembered at parting to apologize for her lack of success in carrying out the Doctor's wishes, he interrupted her.

"I fear it is entirely my own fault," he said. "I understand that in such cases the active mental coöperation of the principal is essential, and I have not aided you. The truth is, I haven't been thinking of the matter at all. Something else has quite occupied my mind." And he sighed again with unmistakable meaning.

The Vampire's artistic sense was stimulated by this subtle flattery, and she entered upon the case with renewed ardor. The cut upon the rival doctor's hand, from a disregarded trifle, developed dangerous symptoms. Amputation was threatened, and while this disaster was averted, a long illness, followed by an enforced exile in Southern California, cost him the greater part of his practice, most of which was secured by Doctor More, up the street. His wife, the jilt, a purely mercenary person, left him and went upon the stage, and is now starring in "East Lynne" and "The Hidden Hand" in a circuit of small towns in Maine.

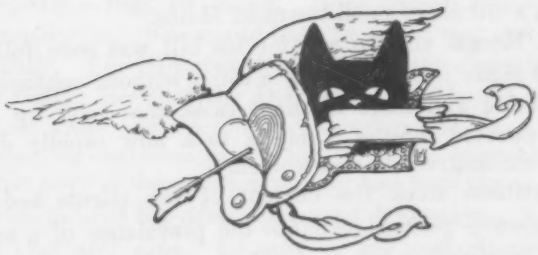
Doctor More's visit to ask for his bill was soon followed by another to settle it, and that by a third, without coherent reason, and still other and more frequent calls, that took up the time formerly devoted by the Vampire to a now rapidly dwindling stream of vindictive men and women.

By Christmas week the current of her clients had entirely ceased to flow — perhaps owing to the prevalence of a seasonable feeling of good-will to men. As Hope stood musing on the eve of the holiday, she heard an unfamiliar noise in the hall, like the working of a tool. The metallic sound continued for some moments, seeming to proceed from the outside of her own door, which she therefore opened suddenly. There stood the Doctor, with Hope's queer sign in one hand and a screw-driver in the other.

"Professional Vampire!" he exclaimed, tossing the beautiful glass sign upon the floor and breaking it. "You are an impostor. I charge you with malpractice. You have entirely mistaken your calling, for I have proved you to be the sweetest, most comforting and good-fortune bearing little woman in the world!"

So in that wise the ex-professional Vampire became soon after

Mrs. Hope More, a useful member of society and a physician's helpmate. At the risk of popularizing a practice now generally admitted to be unhygienic and ill-advised, it must be stated as a curious scientific fact that with the first kiss of betrothal all traces of Hope Strong's malign psychic power wholly and irrecoverably disappeared.



As an Officer and a Gentleman.*

BY HOLMAN DAY.

OR many years Col. William Henry Brastow has been the first to break the mid-afternoon quiet of the Black Elephant saloon. The Black Elephant is outside the more populous section of the city, but it has close business connection with the largest cock-pit, and that is sufficient backing for any saloon.

Exactly as the westering sun cuts under the awning of the private wine room Col. William Henry Brastow arrives. Bob Moore, the faro king, is usually the second arrival, and Bob carefully times himself to get there about ten minutes later than the Colonel. The latter is jealous of his record. He always finds Crinky Croteau, the bartender, asleep in his hammock chair. When the Colonel wakes him Crinky will regularly say:

"Well, eet's on masalf dis nam', C'nal."

Then, with his hand outstretched toward the bottles and his eyebrows raised inquiringly, he will wait for the Colonel's reply, which invariably is:

"Sour mash, Crinky, and be careful how you pick the bottle."

There were various surmises as to what would happen if Crinky should give him whiskey that has been made north of Mason and Dixon's line. Most of the habitués of the Black Elephant believe that blood alone could wash out the insult.

This day Colonel Brastow arrived on the minute. He rolled off the saddle and hitched his tall sorrel to the rail in the eastern shade of the Black Elephant. He brushed the dust off his garb, which was the uniform of a colonel in the Confederate army.

Strangers who meet the Colonel will sometimes take their lives in their hands and ask him about the uniform, especially those who entertain distinct recollections of the surrender of Lee.

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"I have never surrendered, suh," the Colonel will thunder. "No damned coward can speak for me when it comes to laying down arms in a just cause. I am still a Confederate officer, by the grace of God, and my flag is the Stars and Bars."

Colonel Brastow swung through the door of the Black Elephant and clanked his spurred way across the tiling. He unbuckled his sword belt as he strode along. The Colonel always places his sword and revolver behind the bar when he enters the saloon, as a precaution. He never drinks with arms on. He fears that in the heat of argument he may kill some one. The Mexican Government pardoned him for his first offence of that sort, out of regard for the fact that he had trained the sharpshooters of Diaz's army. He settled the next affair by paying a fine of eight hundred silver dollars. That money came out of the funds allowed him as a pension by the Mexican Government. The Colonel now takes no more chances.

As the unbuckled belt swung loose into his left hand the Colonel stopped and stared. Crinky, fully awake, stood behind the bar with the mop towel in his hand. Col. William Henry Brastow fairly gasped in astonishment. Crinky smiled and jabbed his thumb over his shoulder in the direction of the inner wine room.

"Som' wan geet on ahead off yo' dis tam'," he said.

For the first time in many years the Colonel was obliged to order his initial drink of the day charged on his account. He therefore was more erect, more grim than usual when he entered the wine room.

As his eyes fell on the new arrival he started back in amazement. At one of the small tables sat an elderly man in the uniform of a Union colonel. The stranger arose, saluted and said in a hearty manner: "If this is Colonel Brastow, then I am glad to see ye. I have heard of ye." As he spoke he put out his hand. "My name is Flock," he went on, "Col. Joseph Flock, of Vermont."

Colonel Brastow pulled down the end of his long moustache and disregarded the outstretched hand.

"I have never shaken hands with a man from north of Mason and Dixon's line, suh," he shouted, "and damme, I never will. What ye wearing them rags for?" he demanded, contemptuously shooting his thumb out at the blue uniform.

"I wear 'em because I've got a right to wear 'em," retorted the other, with heat. He also pulled at his moustache and glared back at Colonel Brastow. "I wear 'em because I've never been mustered out. Those administration hogs in Washington put understrappers — understrappers, s'r — in the regular army an' proposed to turn down a man like myself who fit from the first Bull Run clear through. Was goin' to cut off my shoulder-straps to give 'em to West Point pets. I refused to be mustered out, s'r. I told 'em what I thought of 'em. An' they was goin' to make trouble for me, but I left the country, and that was thirty years ago. I've heard of you, Col. William Henry Brastow. While you've been makin' an army for Diaz I've been tellin' 'em how to fight in Central America. But I'm still a Union officer, an' no salaried shark in Washington has got the power to take off my shoulder-straps."

As the stranger talked, Colonel Brastow surveyed him and visibly thawed. When the Union veteran, at the conclusion of his defiance, brought down his left hand on his tarnished sword hilt and vibrated his right fist in the air, Colonel Brastow stretched out his open palm.

"We meet on neutral ground, Colonel Flock," said he.

"We do," replied Colonel Flock.

"We are still officers and gentlemen, in spite of damn fools who think they know enough to run things," said Colonel Brastow.

"We are," replied Colonel Flock.

"We are the only two men on the American continent who can shake hands as officers who haven't allowed their superiors to disgrace and degrade them by bargains and trades."

"We are," said Colonel Flock, with another bang at his sword hilt.

"You are the only man from north of Mason and Dixon's line that is fit to shake hands with. Will you do me the honor?" and Colonel Brastow threw out his hand with an open gesture.

"You bet!" cried Colonel Flock. They pumphandled so vigorously that their long gray locks fluttered.

"Now, between officers and gentlemen," commenced Colonel Brastow —

"Le's take a drink," finished Colonel Flock.

"Faro Bob" Moore found them with their heads together over one of the narrow tables, spitting little clots of foam upon each other's faces, so vigorously were they discussing the lamentable situation existing in the United States of America. They agreed that, as gentlemen and officers, they could not return.

That evening they explained the situation fully to the Black Elephant's coterie and declared that they, representing as they did the only official remnants of the Union and Confederate armies, had arranged a truce to continue until further notice.

At eleven o'clock that night the truce was fully cemented. General Agramente, Bob Moore, and other volunteers then made strenuous attempts to prop Col. William Henry Brastow and Col. Joseph Flock on their horses. The eminent officers, however, hadn't sufficient stiffening about their persons, and were therefore put in bed together in one of the upper rooms of the Black Elephant. That night, for the first time in thirty years — though the busy North and the great South never realized it — the last flicker of enmity lay quenched under one blanket in the Black Elephant saloon in the City of Mexico.

It was the beginning of a wonderful friendship. Col. William Henry Brastow had never made of any one a close confidant. In fact, the sporting circles of the Black Elephant did not offer material for any very close and confiding intimacies. Any one who knew the Black Elephant crowd as well as did Colonel Brastow understood what good reason existed for reserve, especially in regard to some things. But as regards Colonel Flock it was "between officers and gentlemen." For the first time in a score and a half of years Colonel Brastow had found a man who stood exactly on his plane.

Before the end of the week "the only Confederate" had given to Colonel Flock two proofs of friendship such as never had been enjoyed by any other man. The Colonel took the Vermont man to his home and introduced him to his handsome young Creole wife, and then he allowed him to watch the forenoon training and grooming of his fighting cock, "Andrew Jackson," the most famous bird in the City of Mexico.

Colonel Brastow never mentioned his wife after the introduction. Not so in the case of Andrew Jackson. The latter furnished

the topic for hours of harangue. Now, after some weeks, it happened that Colonel Flock, admitted daily to the intimacy of the Brastow establishment, would have remained fully as readily in the inner garden and talked with and of Señora Brastow. The Vermonter's whitish-gray eyes commenced to take on a curious melting, watery expression when he pressed her hand as he arrived and departed. Colonel Brastow never noticed anything of that. He was too busily engaged in talking of Andrew Jackson. He always hurried Colonel Flock to the courtyard of the stable. This was Andrew Jackson's domain. The two men sat on camp stools and watched the trainer handle the bird.

"Can lick anything in the hen line that ever swallowed grit," was the Colonel's encomium. "He's the son of Davy Crockett, he by Jim Bowie, and he by Daniel Boone, the cock that was never defeated. Yellow-legged and high station — look at him, Colonel Flock, and tell me if you ever saw anything with crop and gizzard that could show more clean points!"

The Vermonter, with the eyes of the Creole taking form in the curls of smoke from his cigarro, would return suitable answer.

"Why, Flock, that bird there has won seventy-six consecutive ring battles and is yet to be conquered — is yet to be pricked. Watch him!"

The attendant would toss the bird into the air and allow him to flutter down against a piece of coarse bagging that was hung just above the hard earth of the courtyard.

"See him shuffle — see him shuffle, Flock!" the Colonel would fairly scream, as the great bird, striving to catch his balance, danced upon the springy cloth. "Those thighs are like steel springs. He can't be licked. General Agramente has fought us five times with the pick of his two thousand cocks, and Andrew has killed in every battle. He is as invincible as the Southern Confederacy shall be as long as I am alive, for I'll never surrender, Flock, never!"

At last the discourses in the courtyard changed their tone. There was continual appeal by Colonel Brastow, a continual reluctant and gradual coming over on the part of Colonel Flock.

It all started from hints and reminiscences dropped day by day by the Vermonter. He had stories to tell, flavored with more or

less Yankee exaggeration, of a certain breed of game-cocks that used to be raised in northern Vermont. At last he got to boasting that if any of the Ethan Allen breed were alive and had been kept up to the scratch, he'd just like to see one of the birds go up against any cock in the world, redoubtable Andrew Jackson included.

"I hain't tryin' to disparage your hen, there, Colonel," Flock declared, "but I have jest got to tell ye that prob'ly them Ethan Allens, Numbers One, Two, Three, and so on down to the present generation, are the greatest fighters ever raised. Why, they're more'n ha'f hawk. They'll start right off out of a barnyard an' fly to hell an' hackenny, 'less ye look out for 'em. Oh, no, there was never anything hatched from aigs that ever could down the reel, true Ethan Allen."

It was after some days of this that Col. William Henry Brastow commenced to tease Colonel Flock to send to Vermont and inquire if he couldn't find one of the birds to fight against Andrew Jackson. Colonel Flock demurred.

"Thunder! We don't want to fight hens, good friends as *we* are," he expostulated.

"But it will be between gentlemen and officers," cried Colonel Brastow. "No matter which bird is licked, we shall bear it as gentlemen should. You and I can fight birds like gentlemen and officers."

The fact that Andrew Jackson had never met his match and was now sighing for worlds to conquer stirred Colonel Brastow to almost frantic insistence. With this untried bugbear of the Ethan Allens looming in his horizon the heart was taken out of his boasts that Andrew was champion of the world. At last he was no longer to be resisted — that is, Colonel Flock thus expressed himself in regard to the matter. So he agreed to write to his old home in Vermont and ascertain if one of the Ethan Allen breed was to be secured. Word came back that one had been shipped and was the greatest fighter of the line, the culmination of speed, points and fierceness. That intelligence settled the matter with Colonel Brastow.

"My sword," he cried, "goes with this battle, Colonel Flock. It shall be passed down as the greatest cock-fight ever pulled off.

If Andrew Jackson is whipped I shall forthwith surrender to you, and you can take me to Washington and deliver me, the last Confederate of them all. But if Andrew Jackson licks, then you, representing the last remnant of the Union army, shall surrender to me, and I will accordingly notify your Government, and again declare myself in arms against their cursed tyranny. It shall be as I have said, or you fail in your duty as an officer and a gentleman, suh."

In the face of this fierce insistence Col. Joseph Flock agreed to the terms. The fact of the matter was, the Vermonter had led Colonel Brastow on to make just that proposition, Brastow not realizing it.

Then said Colonel Flock, "As between officers and gentlemen, though I much enjoy our chats in the courtyard while Jackson is in training, still I believe that, until the battle comes off, I ought not to watch your bird."

"That was spoken like the only man from north of Mason and Dixon's line that is fit to shake by the hand," shouted Colonel Brastow. "I know you would not take any unfair advantage of what you may see of the old bird's work, but as this is the greatest battle of 'em all I appreciate your motives and your delicacy. But in the meantime, make my home your own as before."

Therefore, while the Colonel was busy with Andrew Jackson in the courtyard, seeing that his raw meat was chopped just right and his fresh lamb's blood was of the proper warmth, Colonel Flock sat in the inner courtyard and talked with the beautiful Creole, still with that watery gleam in his eyes.

The terms of the conflict were announced first of all at the Black Elephant. The fact that each owner had posted a thousand-dollar bet on his bird was sufficient to stir public interest to an unusual extent. The proclaimed promise that the fight was, in effect, to settle the last whimper of the Rebellion in the United States was further reason why the entire city discussed the approaching affair. In all the excitement, the friendship of Col. William Henry Brastow and Col. Joseph Flock continued without interruption. Every night at eleven o'clock they were boosted on their horses and rode away home from the Black Elephant, hugging close together and bumping shoulders as their horses ambled.

With delicacy equal to that shown by Colonel Flock, Colonel Brastow did not seek to have a peep at his rival's bird. And no one in the City of Mexico saw the scion of Ethan Allen during the days of training.

The fight came off on the third Sunday from the day the agreements were signed. Even the resources of the great Tagabuya arena were insufficient for the throngs that clambered to behold the contest. Colonel Flock was there first, with his bird crated and hidden by bagging draped over the slats. When Colonel Brastow arrived at the side of the pit he was accompanied by a score of the most distinguished men in the city. Even the British ambassador graced the occasion. A torn Confederate battle flag covered the crate of Andrew Jackson and the Colonel carefully rolled it off and draped it over his right arm. Then he straightened up and removed his campaign hat.

"Three cheers for John C. Calhoun!" he yelled, turning to the eager faces tiered above him. The cheers were given without an instant's hesitation, and the Colonel turned again to the pit with as cheerful a face as though he didn't realize that the throng would have yelled just as heartily for Judas Iscariot.

The Government soldier raised his musket and fired into the air. Following this signal he called in a loud voice that as the principals had paid for the Government license and settled all dues, private bets could now be placed at the pit side without commission charges.

In the meantime sweepers were busy in the pit. This was to guard against the possibility of any bettor having thrown down opium balls.

Next, a clean white canvas was laid as a further precaution. Then all was in readiness for the birds. But just as the referee had given the command to open the crates, Colonel Brastow called a halt in a loud tone. All eyes were turned on him and a murmur of wonder ran from mouth to mouth in the assemblage, like a buzz from a huge hive.

"I forgot something," shouted the Colonel, as he looked in the rear tiers for a familiar face. He unbuckled his sword belt and held it, together with his revolver, high in air.

"Here, Felipe, whatever your name is," he shouted, "come

down here and get these. I'm liable to get excited and kill somebody before I think what I'm doing." A roar of laughter saluted this interruption.

"The birds!" cried the referee.

While Colonel Flock and his helpers were fumbling at the bagging that covered their crate, Andrew Jackson was produced from his pen, a-straddle on the arm of the handler, who held his palm firmly on the cock's back. A cheer greeted the appearance of the veteran, the winner of seventy-six battles. Jackson never looked more fit, every feather in place, his eyes sparkling and his attack leg kicking nervously till the three-inch steel spur twinkled in the sunlight.

Then the bagging was thrown back from the crate of the Vermont mystery and a handler, his hands and arms swathed, dragged forth a fluttering, squalling fowl. A cry of astonishment — a real yap of surprise — came from the tiered faces. In the buzzing murmur that succeeded there was no note of admiration.

Then the spectators commenced to laugh. The City of Mexico had never seen anything in the cock-fighting line just like Ethan Allen of Vermont. His legs were long, but were bowed almost to the curve of a wish-bone. His plumage was a dirty grayish-black, and his tail feathers were scarcely more than stubby stiff quills with a little filmy fluff adhering here and there. To add to his general grotesqueness, all the feathers had been carefully plucked from his neck and upper breast. Even Andrew Jackson, straddling the arm of his handler, emitted a hoarse "Craw-w-w," when Ethan appeared. But the Vermont veteran was too intent on his own matters to take note of the sensation he had created. He objected to the restraint that was being put upon him. Finally he made a desperate peck with his gnarled bill and grabbing his handler by his right thumb nail nearly yanked it out. The handler yelled and dropped Ethan, who flapped to the ground and strolled out upon the canvas. Once in the sunlight he crouched slightly, stretched sideways one crooked leg, and unfolded along the member, with raspy rustling, a tattered wing. Having thus expressed his calm delight at getting out of the dark box, he evidently bethought himself that there might be something important on the tapis that day, for he immediately reared his head,

hooked his neck over like a shepherd's crook and sounded the most raucous, discordant and ear-splitting cock-challenge ever heard in the City of Mexico. Then having announced that, so far as he was concerned, the lists were open, he meditatively picked an insect off his leg and waited.

The battle was on immediately, for Andrew Jackson's handler gently tossed the impatient bird forth toward the centre of the pit.

The first round was so tame an affair that the people along the tiers commenced to grumble a little. The cocks seemed to be satisfying their curiosity in regard to each other. The scrutiny bestowed by Ethan on his opponent was merely listless, but Andrew Jackson, by every perk of his head and snap of his neck, seemed to be expressing his astonishment that such a bird as the one that faced him could really be a fighter.

"Ginger 'em up, ginger 'em up," snapped Colonel Brastow, as the birds were drawn to their corners after one fruitless shuffle had been exchanged.

At the pit side goats were slaughtered and the warm blood was fed to the birds. The blood was also rubbed on their combs and under their wings. When they were released again, the Mexican bird made a straight rush at the Vermonter, like a yellow-legged thunderbolt. Ethan had not reckoned on such a surprising sortie, for when the blur of whirring feathers and legs had disintegrated, down over the Vermont cock's bare breast was trickling blood. The steel spur of the son of Davy Crockett had slashed his throat.

The backers on each side seemed impressed rather peculiarly by the circumstance. Col. Joseph Flock dropped his head into his hands and actually sobbed.

"Ethan Allen is licked," he said chokingly to his helper. "Nothin' with horn toe-nails ever jabbed him before. He hain't used to it. He's a goner."

On the other side of the pit Col. William Henry Brastow appeared almost as depressed.

"That moth-eaten old manure-scratcher has got Andrew rattled," he grumbled. "Never knew Andrew to give a blow like that. He has killed in seventy-six consecutive battles, gentlemen, and has always done it with a crescent-shaped cut under the left wing.

But he can't get his eyes off that infernal wizened-up hide of that Yankee dust-rag, there!"

After their first brisk shuffle the birds backed away and with heads almost flat on the canvas glared at each other. Then each slowly dropped his beak to the fabric and commenced whetting the point. The crowd murmured expectantly, for this meant that the birds were about to close for the death-struggle. The stropping finished, the feathered gladiators backed away cautiously and then came together simultaneously. Andrew Jackson threw himself into the air and prepared to shuffle according to the code. But Ethan Allen then and there gave the City of Mexico an example of Yankee cock-fighting tactics that will be talked about at the Black Elephant bar for many a year. He jumped backward as the Mexican cock rose, and extending those stubby tail feathers like the quills on a porcupine's back, he sat wholly sustained on his personal trestle work. Both his feet and his beak were free. Andrew Jackson made his spur-jab where, from past experience, the other cock usually was, found only empty air, and fell helplessly down on Ethan. The Vermonter seized the Mexican bird's neck with both claws and with his fierce beak wrenched his antagonist's head off and tossed it away. In an instant he was up and stood with one claw clutching the neck of Andrew Jackson, the blood gushing out on the clean white canvas.

He again hooked his neck in a curve like a siphon tube and as he screamed out his ear-splitting yell of triumph, Col. Joseph Flock, his face pallid with excitement, leaped into the pit and shouted:

"He's crowin' the 'Star Spangled Banner' an' he don't give a damn for the whole of Mexico."

A moment later out from the pushing and jostling crowd strode Col. William Henry Brastow. His sword had been restored to him and he bore it handle toward the victor. A hush, sudden and deep, fell over the excited assemblage.

"Col. Joseph Flock," said the aged Confederate, "I now keep my agreement as a gentleman and an officer. This man here behind me holds the stakes and will deliver them to you here on the spot. And now, suh, — now — suh —" the Colonel's voice broke pathetically, "I deliver to you the sword of the last

Confederate, a sword that I have disgraced by venturing it like a damned fool on a cock-fight. I was crazy when I did it, but I stand to my word like a gentleman and an officer, suh."

Colonel Flock reached out and took the sword by the hilt. As he did so Ethan Allen, looking for a higher place from which to crow his frantic hilarity, hopped upon the sword that stretched horizontally between the two men. Both made a cuff at him and with a hoarse yawp he launched himself into the air, just grazed the heads of the crowd as he gathered speed and then disappeared over the adjacent roofs, flapping as lumberingly as a vulture. Not a word was said until the bird had been lost to sight. Even the two principals stood with mouths agape.

As the eyes of the people were once more focussed on them the same idea occurred to all the friends of the parties. It was believed that Colonel Flock would make a nice little speech and return the sword to the unsurrendered Confederate, and that all would then be asked to adjourn to the bar of the Black Elephant to drink with the winner. Col. William Henry Brastow believed so more implicitly than any of the rest. When Colonel Flock tried to take the sword Colonel Brastow even hung on a bit, thinking that the other really had no definite notion of taking it. But Colonel Flock yanked it out of the amazed Confederate's hand and said sternly:

"Col. William Henry Brastow, you are a prisoner of war. I place you under parole and order you to remain in the confines of the Black Elephant saloon until I return."

Then Colonel Flock tucked the sword and the stakes under his arm and took his way out of the pit.

Like a gentleman and an officer Colonel Brastow, with all his retinue, went at once to the bar of the Black Elephant and there hour after hour he stood and sought to drown his grief. But the grief refused to be drowned, even in sour mash. The Colonel grew more and more lugubrious, until at last the tears were streaming down his cheeks as he talked.

"My God, gentlemen," he said over and over, "I cared nothing for the paltry dollars. I do grieve for Andrew Jackson, son of Davy Crockett, and winner in seventy-six consecutive pit battles, killed at last by an infernal hen-hawk that had to sit on his tail to

do it. Yet I could have stood Andrew Jackson's death like a man. But my sword! The sword that I would not surrender at the dictates of cowards — I risked that honored sword like a fool. And he didn't give it back, like a gentleman and an officer should have done. Gentlemen, damn a Yankee!"

At sunset Col. Joseph Flock had not re-appeared and Colonel Brastow still hung at the bar, observing his parole. He sent one of his friends at last to his house that he might explain his whereabouts to his wife.

"Take this ring," said Colonel Brastow to the friend. "Show it at the gate. Otherwise they won't allow you to get within a rod of the house — my people won't. My sword or my ring — that is the only passport. Handsome wives may steal men's honor, but not from men like me."

A half hour later the gallop of a horse thudded without and then the friend rushed in and whispered in the Colonel's ear. The friend thought it a matter for secrecy. Not so the Colonel. With a roar like a bull he threw his hand into the air, called the Black Elephant crowds around him and bellowed at them disconnectedly.

"Used my sword — deceived my people — said I had sent for my wife — she went — they have betrayed me — I — gentlemen, I call on you to note that the conditions of parole have been broken — I take the field, and I take it honorably, as a gentleman and an officer."

Sobered, his face gray, he walked out of the saloon, cinched his horse, threw himself into the saddle and rode away.

Nine days later, exactly as the westering sun cut under the awning of the wine room, Col. William Henry Brastow rode up to the Black Elephant saloon.

He hitched his sorrel, flicked the dust from his uniform, walked in and, as he unbuckled his belt, his clanking sword awoke Crinky, the bar-tender. As the Colonel passed his weapons over the bar Crinky noticed that it was the old sword. But Crinky Croteau asked no questions. He simply grinned and ventured the well-worn joke that again the Colonel had caught him napping. The usual drink of sour mash was handed out and then Colonel Brastow went into the private room.

Faro Bob Moore arrived ten minutes later. He extended his hand, but before Colonel Brastow took it he said very gravely:

"Colonel Moore, before I take your hand I have to explain to you that it is still the hand of a gentleman and an officer. I shall look to you to explain to the others. No man must mention it to me. I met the Union forces commanded by Col. Joseph Flock, of Vermont. The enemy outnumbered me just two to one. But I engaged them. Colonel Flock died on the field of battle."

There was a moment's silence. Then Faro Bob said hesitatingly:

"I beg your pardon, Colonel, but as — well, as I am to explain, I would like to — well, your wife, you know," he blurted.

"The occasion was such," said Colonel Brastow quietly, "that I decided to make no prisoners of war."

A significant glance passed between the two men as they shook hands.

"Crinky!" Moore shouted.

Col. William Henry Brastow put up a remonstrating hand.

"It must be with me this time, Colonel Moore," he said gently.

The Girl in Gray.*

BY ALEXANDER BLACK.

THE Texas country. The late winter fields, brown, yellow, purple to the horizon. The peach blossoms, the laurel bushes, the dagger plants. The chirrup of plover, the piccolo of the red bird. The train lumbering northward from San Antonio.

Sherman Garrett was conscious of the monotonous panorama, of the ribbon of land and the ribbon of sky. A definite fact was the silhouette of the girl in gray.

He first had seen her at San Antonio. In company with Dr. Parvin he had been studying the sleepy missions and the sleepier gambling dens, bartering at the curiosity shops, riding shaggy ponies in clouds of white dust, and ornamenting the façade of the hotel, when one morning, like the advent of radiant To-day, she loomed in the arch of the Alamo.

Afterward it seemed quite characteristic and inevitable that she should have dawned to them just as she did against the background of Mexican romance. She wore a gray gown, and in her hat fluttered a large gray feather.

"I wonder who she is?" exclaimed Parvin. Any one having acquaintance with Parvin would have expected him to wonder who she was. "Looks bored."

"And lonesome," added Garrett, feelingly.

Just then the girl was joined by three men, with whom she presently sauntered toward the hotel.

"Company, and varied company," laughed Parvin. One of the men evidently was close upon fifty, ruddy, prematurely stooped. His companions were young, one of them spare, sharp in feature, swaggering in gait, the other fat, smooth, expressionless.

Before night Parvin reported that the thin young man was the

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old fellow's son. "He tries hard to be devilish," said Parvin. "Smokes cigarettes, drinks Martinis, and sprinkles tips all day."

"The Prodigal Son," mused Garrett.

"I can't make out the other object that hangs around with him."

"The Fatted Calf," suggested Garrett.

Parvin grinned through a ring of cigar smoke. "They both have the impertinence to show occasional attention to that girl."

"She should know better," protested Garrett.

On the following day Parvin reported that she had called the elderly man "father." "And so," said Parvin, "we have another character in the dramatis personæ — the Fond Father."

"I'm shocked," declared Garrett, "that you, a man of science, shouldn't have found visible proofs of the relationship long ago."

They enjoyed so much these speculations over the group as to avoid, or at least to neglect, practical measures for better information. Garrett saw the girl in the dining room, where he learned to look for her in the last minutes of the meal hours; he saw her walking alone one day among the shops; he saw her in the hotel court where the big palms were bandaged in burlap against a possible "norther." When the doctor started south to Laredo, and Garrett took an early train north on his trip to Dallas and Little Rock, they had formed the habit of calling her "Miss Alamo" in recollection of the day she had dawned upon them in the crumbling frame of the Mexican doorway.

And now she sat there, on the other side of the car, her expressive profile against the flowing lines of the Texas country. She wore the gray gown in which Garrett first had seen her. During the early part of the journey she had been accompanied by the Fond Father, and had received visits from the Prodigal Son and the Fatted Calf, who finally carried the Fond Father off with them to the forward car, which was divided between negro passengers and white smokers.

She talked gayly with the men, yet gave no sign of regretting their departure. To Garrett there was something piquing in this circumstance. He said to himself that this dash of self-sufficiency was one of the traits that gave to the American girl so much of fascination. Such platitudes naturally occur to a man who sits

opposite a silhouette. As for the gray gown, a flip of the hem showed that it was lined with crimson, a deep, inflammatory crimson, the ultimate red — adroit symbolism! expressing in its contrast the head and heart of woman.

It was very warm. Miss Alamo fanned herself with a folded time-table. Then she sought to raise her window. Thanks to an official ingenuity which has regard to the necessity for a due and proper sociability among passengers, the window would not budge. Miss Alamo's right glove split squarely across the palm as Garrett sprang forward to help her.

She thanked him in just the right way. At a later time Garrett could not recall precisely how she did it, but he remembered that the manner was just what it should have been. She neither took the service for granted nor spoke a disproportionate gratitude.

"Sorry I wasn't quicker," Garrett said. "I might have saved the glove."

She laughed without any apparent resentment for this unnecessary supplement to the incident, and for the first time glanced at his face. "My punishment for having them too small."

It remained for Garrett to pick up a pamphlet describing the sights of San Antonio which she had brushed from the seat. As he rose he jostled some one in the aisle. It was the Prodigal Son, with the Fatted Calf at his elbow.

"I beg your pardon," said Garrett.

"Don't mention it," said the Prodigal Son, who added: "Eh — didn't I see you at the Menger?"

"Yes," admitted Garrett, divided between a feeling of resentment that the Prodigal Son should have seen him anywhere, and acceptance of an excuse for proximity to Miss Alamo.

"I thought so," joined in the Fatted Calf, in an impersonal way, as if it didn't make any difference to him.

The Prodigal Son wrenched feverishly at a sickly moustache, which had the appearance of utter exhaustion under a persistent effort to make it curl up at the ends. "I got awfully tired of that place," he said.

"Did you?" asked Garrett, colorlessly.

The Fatted Calf sat tentatively on the arm of one of the seats.

"Yes," he said in endorsement, "It is stupid enough there. What can a man do, you know?"

Garrett indicated that this was unanswerable.

"And they can't make a cocktail," complained the Prodigal Son.

"They have considerable practice," observed Miss Alamo, significantly.

The Fatted Calf exhibited a pleased infantile smile. "Willie," he said, "she's on."

"Oh, I tell my sister here," cried Willie, "that these winter trips South drive a man to drink. And I think she's afraid I'll hurt some of these Texans. What did you do with it?" he asked her, and she tapped a little satchel on the seat beside her.

"Now I rather liked the Mardi Gras," murmured the Fatted Calf, "and St. Augustine isn't so bad, though you soon get all there is of it. You hear the New York orchestra fiddle in the loggia, and the marine band toot at the barracks; you buy a live alligator in St. George Street, and a membership ticket in the Country Club, loft a ball into the moat of San Marco, and you are at the end of the string."

The Prodigal Son had not had a cigarette for eight minutes and he showed the effects of the privation.

"Smoke?" he asked Garrett, fingering his case.

Garrett thought he wouldn't, and watched them amble up the aisle and melt into the blue haze of the forward car. Being thus rid of them, Garrett turned to Miss Alamo. "I was going to say that if you cared to read something of the historic associations of San Antonio I have a volume here that will interest you. This book by Corner is an authority."

She appeared to be much interested in the book. "Did you see Davy Crockett's house?" she asked Garrett.

"Yes," Garrett answered, "and I didn't carry away any of it."

"You must be very conscientious," she said. "I took this much of it for a friend who dotes on that sort of real estate." And she picked a fragment of yellow stone out of her satchel.

"After all," suggested Garrett, "the ruin can be made very useful in that way, so long as it lasts."

"I never thought about the thing getting used up after awhile."

"I shouldn't worry about it," laughed Garrett. "Fads are a great comfort."

"Have you any?" she asked, placidly.

Garrett shook his head. He had taken the seat in front of Miss Alamo. "I have only vices."

"You don't look it," she said, almost seriously.

"That's always the way," said Garrett. "I suppose you have a great many vices — I mean accomplishments; that's what a woman calls them."

This amused Miss Alamo. "Yes," she said, "I have all I can manage — and they accumulate so. The trouble is that most things get so tiresome. I suppose I really should have a few vices if they didn't get tiresome, too. There are some things, though, that I never get tired of, like riding — my own horse — and playing poker. I wish those men up there would invite me in."

Garrett could not resist a searching glance at her face. He had wondered whether she was a New York girl toned up by travel or a Texas girl toned down by Vassar; and it had occurred to him, naturally, that as most girls were not what you expected, she probably wasn't either of these. Under some other circumstances he would have suspected that she said what she had said for the amusement of puzzling him. What actually puzzled him was that he at once doubted whether she had any intention whatever.

The train had stopped. Garrett could hear the laughter and exclamations of the four men at the other end of the car who were engaged in an extremely audible game of cards. At this moment a new passenger appeared in the nearby door and dropped into the seat Garrett had occupied.

He was a tall, handsome man, with thick, tawny hair, a graceful moustache and friendly blue eyes. Both Garrett and Miss Alamo looked at him. He certainly was good to look upon. Garrett remarked that his broad-brimmed felt hat, with four dimples in the crown, was of about the same shade as Miss Alamo's dress.

The newcomer studied his watch. "Train's a little late, isn't it?" he asked Garrett in an easy tone.

"I suppose so. These trains always are."

The train boy came wheezing through the car. "Oranges, apples, dried figs, pepsin gum, and 'Quo Vadis.'"

Garrett grinned. "Strange animal," he said to Miss Alamo, indicating the train boy. "Don't you wish that you were an author, and ranked with the fundamental necessaries of life?"

The engine breathed and muttered in the quiet of the station. Garrett gazed through the window at a mule cart with a dusky driver, asleep; at a shabby "general merchandise" shop beyond the white road; at a young Mexican rolling a cigarette with yellow paper, and lifting his fingers one by one, as from a musical instrument, until the thing had burned down into the shadow of his moustache; at a big hulking bird circling in the clear sky.

"What sort of a fowl is that?" asked Garrett of the newcomer, who was staring in the same direction.

"A buzzard," replied the handsome man, who smiled his charming smile and added, "You're from the North, I reckon?"

Garrett nodded.

"Ugh!" shivered Miss Alamo. "How I hate buzzards!"

"They have a sinister reputation," said Garrett. He had been staring through the window again. "I was just fancying," he went on, "a man wounded, or helpless out there — would they pounce on him?"

"Not unless he was dead," replied the handsome man. He smiled again his charming smile. "And the longer he had been dead the better they would like him."

Garrett looked for a questioning second at the blue eyes of the newcomer. He fancied that Miss Alamo rather liked the man.

When the train had been rumbling again for a number of miles the card players became particularly audible, and the handsome man seemed annoyed. "You would think this was their private car," he said to Garrett.

Then one of the men used a disagreeable epithet in a loud tone. A dozen men in other parts of the car looked quickly toward them. Both Garrett and the handsome man arose, and the latter strode forward in the car. Miss Alamo caught Garrett by the sleeve. "Let them alone," she whispered, "or we'll have fireworks."

"Look here!" came the mellow voice of the handsome man, "there's a lady in the car, and you've got to respect her presence. Understand me?" The four men were on their feet as the speaker strode back toward his seat.

"What is that to you?" roared one of the card players, flinging the pack into the aisle.

There were other loud words, a confused murmur and stir through the car, and Garrett saw the handsome man pull the bell cord. The air brakes squealed. A moment of startled silence fell over the group of passengers.

"A trick!" cried Miss Alamo in Garrett's ear. "It's a hold-up!"

As she spoke, Garrett saw the gleam of three revolvers at the other end of the car, and heard the metallic voice of one of the card players shouting, "Hands up, everybody! and quick about it!"

Garrett afterwards remembered that it was like a vote at a meeting, except that everyone was voting twice. He was surprised at the instinctive response his own hands made to a demand of which he scarcely had realized the purport.

He saw the quick movement of one of the men who turned to the forward car; he heard the grunt of the trucks as the car stopped; he became conscious of some movement and a sharp command outside the train. Then he impulsively turned his eyes to the handsome man across the aisle.

The handsome man was standing with his back toward the window, one foot on the seat, and over his knee hung his strong, white hand, fingering the hair trigger of a revolver.

"Gentlemen," came the musical baritone of the handsome man, addressing the car, "you will hold your hands a little higher. Colonel Cooly, of San Marcos, is particularly in danger. We wish no trouble. Make everything as pleasant as you can for our friend here, who will take charge of your watches and money."

The "our friend" of this speech, a short, youngish man with nervous dark eyes, had a sleek revolver in one hand, and with the other was running through the pockets of the men nearest him with a mysterious, fascinating agility.

"You will understand, gentlemen," continued the handsome man, "that it will be very unhealthful for any one to make a false movement. And permit me to say, to begin with, that at the very first sign of unfriendliness I personally shall be compelled to kill this young lady." Garrett grew hot, and his head

throbbed. "I hope no one will take the responsibility of placing me in such an awkward position."

"Dear me!" cried Miss Alamo at Garrett's elbow, "Must I give up all my drawn work and souvenirs?" She had opened her little satchel with an imploring look toward the handsome man, who turned his blue eyes upon her long enough to say, "No, no! we don't want anything from you. You are our mascot — or their martyr, as the case may be. Make yourself as comfortable as you can." And he smiled again, showing his even white teeth.

Garrett heard a little snort from the engine. The men who had come out of the sheltered lane by the track had ordered the engineer to uncouple. He saw the fingers going from pocket to pocket, and heard the peremptory low-voiced remarks of their owner, as he searched for and transferred the booty. He saw the man at the door, his revolver levelled, his eyes searching every corner of the car. He saw the back of a fourth robber in the door of the car beyond, commanding the aisle of the smoker. He saw through the blue haze the pink palms of the Fatted Calf.

The strenuous silence had endured until Garrett felt that his nerves were ready to rebel or to break, when a sharp explosion tore the air and a little stiletto of flame leapt out of Miss Alamo's lap. At the same instant the handsome man dropped his weapon, grunting, "You little devil!"

Almost before the revolver reached the floor, Garrett sprung for it, and its owner followed him, the two soon wrestling confusedly in the aisle.

"Hands up!" yelled the man at the door, firing as a threat, and the youngish man who had been looting the pockets stood for a moment irresolute, his revolver covering the men on the floor.

Three shots in quick succession sounded from the direction of the smoker; the robber with the booty fell forward on his face. The man behind him staggered, then dashed for the platform.

As Garrett and his opponent at last struggled to their feet, the little glittering thing they wrestled for barked in their hands.

Garrett had the weapon. The handsome man faltered backward, his face stiffening. Garrett heard him shuffle on the plat-

form as he himself turned to the uproar. The quick battle was over.

No. There were other shots. They saluted the three men who had mounted the horses in the lane. At first, Garrett thought his late antagonist was one of these, but they found the handsome man in the ditch.

"Three dead," muttered a big stockman at Garrett's side. "It didn't pay 'em."

The handsome man opened his eyes when they had propped him against the embankment. When he smiled, a faint bloodless imitation of the thing he was capable of doing, Garrett turned and saw Miss Alamo with a cup of water. She held the cup to the man's lips.

"You wouldn't leave me to the buzzards, would you?" he asked, and tried to smile again.

"I forgot to tell you that I could shoot a little," said Miss Alamo to Garrett. But her lips trembled. "I'm so glad none of us was hurt." Garrett fancied at the moment that she included him in a pleasantly definite way.

"Are the others all right?" he asked, with real magnanimity, though he felt every other emotion to be obscured by his admiration of her.

"Yes, and the funny thing is that my husband fired the first shot in there! He's awfully set up about it. And I never knew he had a gun with him!"

"Your hus — hus'band?" stammered Garrett, before he could check himself.

The exultant visage of the Fatted Calf loomed behind the girl. "Here's the best part of it all!" murmured the Fatted Calf. "Those two other fellows who were killed were the fellows with the plunder. What luck!"

Old Joe's Grubstake.*

BY EDITH KING LATHAM.

LD Joe Cunnill was a picturesque feature of life in Sauger's Pass, although the townspeople were not greatly impressed with the quaint side of the old man's character. To them it was an old story, once both comical and pathetic, but now grown stale from frequent reading.

Ever since the founding of Sauger's, Old Joe had figured in the history of the little mountain settlement, at first as a pioneer owner of the first stamp mill, and afterwards, through the sharp vicissitudes of a miner's life, he had slipped down to his present position of the forlorn but ever-hopeful fortune seeker, his sole possessions a lanky mule, a rifle and a meagre prospecting outfit. With this stock in trade, he was wont to set out on his expeditions through Siskiyou County, often travelling as far south as Redding, and sometimes washing out two or three dollars a week in gold, on the banks of the Sacramento, where it rushes through the narrow mountain cañons.

But these lucky days were strung out very sparingly through the weeks and months, and Old Joe's fare was of the simplest. The old frying-pan, scarred veteran of many campaigns, seldom heard the sputtering of anything more tempting than the staple diet of salt pork, except for an occasional trout or rabbit when the miner grudgingly gave the time to fishing or hunting. The mule fared better, for the upper Sacramento cañon abounds in springs and luxuriant herbage.

Just before the winter snows settled down on Sauger's Pass, Joe was accustomed to betake himself southward, a hundred miles or more, where prospecting could still be carried on during the winter months. But, although Joe was away from Sauger's most of the time, he still called it home, perhaps because it was the scene of his earlier, prosperous days. Each time the shuffling old man and the pack mule appeared again, after an absence, on the

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streets of tne town there was usually some one who took sufficient interest in a hoary joke to call out, "Hello, Joe, made your pile this time, I s'pose!" But Old Joe paid little heed to these jibes and was not one whit discouraged about the strike he was some day to make, and thus retrieve his lost fortune and the rosy hopes of '49 days.

In 1894, considerable excitement prevailed over the wonderful luck of two young miners, named Barnes, who had taken out in one day on their claim on Trinity River, in Shasta County, eight hundred dollars in dust and nuggets. The Barnes boys had tried to keep the matter quiet, but it had leaked out in San Francisco when Jim Barnes went to the city to have the ore assayed. In a short time there was a stampede for Trinity River which closely rivalled '49 times.

As it happened, that year Old Joe Cunnill had varied his usual programme by remaining all winter and well into the summer in Sauger's, and it was not until one morning in July that he and his mule were seen in marching order, slowly making their way down the county road toward the south.

Three men, sitting on the veranda of the Shasta House, were discussing the new mining boom. Several of the young men of Sauger's Pass had become infected with the fever and had left the previous week for Trinity. The men on the hotel veranda were inclined to laugh at the enthusiasm of the younger element.

"You mark my words," declared the proprietor of the Shasta House, "those fellers will come back with the laugh on the wrong side of their mouths. I've seen a good many such crazes in these parts, and I'm not sorry that I stuck to everyday business and never run off on any of those wild-goose chases to find a 'Con. Virginia,' or a 'Yellow Jacket' up a ten-cent creek. Just because a couple of lucky fools have washed out a neat lot of color in two days ain't sayin' that it's goin' to last the rest of the week. I bet you dollars to doughnuts them Barneses will be glad to sell their claim for less than what they took out in one day, three months to come."

"Yes, mining in California's different to what it was in '49, and the early fifties, or even in the seventies," rejoined John Spandling, owner of the shingle mill. "It comes in spurts nowadays."

"Well, so it did in '49," put in Mr. Pendleton of the General Merchandise Store.

"Yes, but the strikes were bigger and more worth while," retorted Spandling.

"I guess the reason we don't hear so much of big strikes nowadays is because people ain't thinkin' only of gold in the pan, as they was in those days," said the hotel-keeper. "Now they can see gold in the orchards, and the grain-fields, and on the sheep's backs, as well as in the creeks and the deeps of the earth. My old father used to say, 'Jonathan, the day will come when we'll have the big bonanzas all over again. They ain't begun to find out the riches of this great State, because they've suddenly spied money on the green outsides of her.'"

"I shouldn't wonder if that was true," assented Spandling. "But here's the spirit of Forty-Nine," he continued, "in the person of Old Joe and his faithful crittur. Wonder where he's off to now. Bet he's heard of the Barneses, and thinks his fortune's comin' this trip."

"Hello, Joe," called the hotel-keeper, "where to now?"

The old man stopped, while the mule improved the opportunity to graze on some long spears of grass which had sprung up around the leaking water trough.

"I'm prospectin'," replied Joe solemnly, as though he was announcing news.

"Bound for Trinity and another Barnes stroke of luck, I'll bet," said one of the men.

"Oh, I dunno," replied the old miner evasively; "mebbe I'll try it again down the river a way." He prodded the mule. The ungainly animal took the hint and moved on.

"Oh, don't you be afraid, Joseph, we ain't goin' to jump your claim. You're welcome to the whole county, as far as we're concerned," said the storekeeper, laughing. Suddenly he slapped his knee, and brought his chair down with a thud on the floor.

"Say, boys, I've got an idea that'll give us some fun and set up the ancient prospector in the highest heaven of joy. Let's grubstake him!"

Loud bursts of laughter greeted the proposition, but after a little, the hugeness of the joke began to appeal strongly to these

prominent citizens of Sauger's. It would give them an unending source of conversation and speculation for warm afternoons all summer, and if the old miner did not find the fortune he sought, the joke would not be lost. If he located a good claim, the stock would be divided among the moneyed men of the enterprise and old Cunnill.

An hour later, the bewildered old man plodded, in a daze, beside his pack mule, with the pleasant recollection of a hearty meal, and the amazing reality of three brilliant twenty-dollar gold pieces clanking their shining sides against each other in his pocket. And as he walked, he could hear the roar of the stamps in the quartz mill which his imagination built again.

The grubstake was kept a secret between the three partners of Old Joe, who amused themselves by mysterious allusions to a wonderfully rich new syndicate, but no amount of argument could persuade them to reveal more than this. The rumor grew that the mill owner, the storekeeper and the hotel man had had a quiet tip on a big thing, and the town was prepared for the announcement that the syndicate had bought out the place, or that monster improvements were to be introduced at Sauger's. But they were totally unprepared for the announcement which burst upon the little town towards the last of October.

The postmaster received word from his brother-in-law, Charley Mason, who farmed between Shasta and Redding, that old Joe Cunnill had struck "pay dirt"! The portion of the letter concerning Joe's fortunes ran as follows:

> . . . Big piece of news for Sauger's! Spread it around. Old Joe has made his strike at last. He's in it this time, sure; got another feller's claim cheap. Didn't wait for the assay, but experts say it's the sure thing. Better make a little fuss over the old feller, "welcome home," etc. It was all quite sudden. Let me know how he got home. I'm going down to S. F. to-morrow.
>
> Forgot to say Joe leaves on the 11.40 train Thursday morning.
>
> Yours,
> CHARLEY.

The news spread like wildfire through Sauger's, and, in less than an hour after the letter was read, everybody knew the story of the three double eagles and their sequel. The three men who had grubstaked the successful miner were the most surprised of all.

In a daze they listened to the suggestions for the improvement of Sauger's in a style befitting a town which boasted of great wealth. Spandling received a hint to enlarge his mills and to build the Spandling Block, pressed brick, with corrugated iron towers. The hotel proprietor was urged to alter his house and include in it an opera house, and Mr. Pendleton was told he must enlarge his stock and open a branch store in Sacramento. These skeleton plans were held in abeyance, however, and a reception committee was appointed to welcome the lucky miner at the four o'clock train on the following day.

The brass band from Roreyville was engaged to lead the procession of citizens, mounted and foot, and a supper was provided at the Shasta House, where Old Joe was to be escorted.

"Wonder what he's done with the long-eared companion of his excursions," observed a citizen. "Shouldn't wonder if he'd miss the old crittur, ridin' in the 'bus up to the hotel."

"It's a pity we haven't got a finer barooch," said another, "but never mind, the parade'll end at the undertaker's. Old Joe'll die, sure, before the celebration's over, from 'shock,' as the high-priced doctors call it."

On Thursday morning Sauger's rose early and decorated the buildings on Main Street with garlands of spruce and fir, and cotton flags left over from the last Fourth of July celebration.

Half an hour before train time, the platform of the little railway station was crowded with expectant Saugerites. All the jokes of the past six months were revived to while away the long moments before the train was due, but no joke was as potent to bring a laugh as the idea of the entire town of Sauger's Pass turning out to honor the arrival of Old Joe Cunnill, whom, three months before, the very dogs had not considered worth a bark.

An echoing whistle from far down the cañon at last brought silence, and the crowd made way for the reception committee to step close to the track. With a warning screech from the engine and a clanging of the bell, the train swept around a curve, rumbled over the bridge, and stopped, puffing impatiently. Sauger's held its breath.

The conductor gave an astonished glance at the crowded platform. "Brass band, by Jove! Who are you farewelling? Send-

ing somebody to Congress?" But no one answered. All eyes were glued on the day coaches down the track, towards which the reception committee hastened.

At last a familiar figure was seen to descend from the high steps. "All aboard!" shouted the conductor, signalling the engineer.

As the engine began to gather momentum slowly, in puffy jerks, for the up-grade run, there was spilled from the second day coach an accumulation of females of assorted sizes, which piled up in a heap on the cindery path beside the track, then rose, one by one, and meekly tagged the steps of Joseph Cunnill, capitalist.

The train crept out of sight around the curve, but Sauger's did not know it. The brass band was silent, and the reception committee stood stock still, and stared stupidly. The committee, at last, regained its presence of mind, and stepped up to Old Joe, but Sauger's guest of honor was timidly making for the trail behind the station, which was the short cut to the town. Isaac Pendleton stopped him. "Here, Joe, old fellow, you ain't goin' to give us the cold shoulder, are you? What you in such a hurry for?"

Old Joe glanced nervously at the storekeeper, then at the unusual crowd. His face turned ashen, he clutched at his wrinkled throat. "You ain't goin' to make me swing for it, air ye?" he pleaded piteously.

The reception committee laughed. "It's turned his head, sure."

"No, Joe," Mr. Pendleton replied, "this isn't Judge Lynch's party, though all the other prominent officials are out to honor you. Come on to the 'bus and tell us all about it." But Joe fell to trembling so that he could scarcely stand.

"Ask — ask her; she'll tell ye," he stammered, pointing behind him. The gaze of the crowd was transferred to the aggregation of females, which presented a skrinking front to the public eye. The oldest, of about forty-five summers, unkempt and forlorn-eyed, gathered the youngest, aged two, to her breast, grouped around her the remaining seven, ranging from eighteen down, and cast her eyes on the ground in frightened confusion. The old miner braced himself, and turned bravely towards the crowd. "Well, ye see, Mr. Pendleton," he said, keeping his eye on the mild-faced storekeeper, "it was somethin' like this. I was prospectin'" — a smile

went the rounds of the crowd — "an' that night the mule died, an' I was peggin' along afoot, kinder lonesome, an' I come across, down the creek, a woman and eight kids what their husband and father had died a week before, and she'd been doin' odd jobs 'round the diggin's and was clean beat out an' lonely-like. Well, when I come along, she jest cried, she was so glad to see me, 'cause I looked like her old dad, an' the children called me grandpap. An' she was goin' to pull up stakes an' make tracks for the poor farm. So I sez, 'Come along with me to the parson's, the one what peddles his Gospel talk through the minin' country,' sez I, because there didn't seem to be nothin' else to do, seein's how she didn't have no pertector. An' I thought mebbe ye wouldn't be terrible put out, gentlemen, if I used the rest of the money to come back to Sauger's an' set up Mely an' the children."

The crowd was very quiet.

"But what about your pile, Joe?" asked Spandling after a moment. "How much, and where did you make the strike?"

"Strike?" repeated Joe in bewilderment. "I didn't make none this time, 'less Mely's the strike."

A groan ran through the multitude, disappointment was pictured on a hundred faces, some looked fairly menacing. It was not often that Sauger's bestirred itself as it had for this occasion which had ended so absurdly. They would be a butt for the ridicule of the whole county.

Old Joe seemed about to drop from fright, Mely and the three eldest girls wept miserably, and the five little ones set up a chorus of terrified wails.

Suddenly, the hotel man stepped up to the woman and spoke to her in a low tone. Then he faced the crowd.

"Boys, you're scarin' the poor critturs to death, with the tender feelin' for Charley Mason glarin' out of your eyes. The reception committee will be responsible for the drawin' up of a testimonial to that gentleman; you leave that to us. But we're a pack of fools, just the same, not to see that this is the biggest joke in California, bigger than the Barneses' strike. If Old Joe didn't bring back nine times more than we expected, then I'm crazy. Whoever heard of a claim that panned out such nuggets as these here?" pointing to the eight young women. "I find," he continued, "that

this estimable lady, Mrs. Joseph Cunnill, is a past master at the wash tub. What do you say to setting her up in 'The Grubstake Laundry,' and requesting that heathen clothes-destroyer, Chin Lee, to seek another sheep-range?"

Sauger's gave a lusty roar. Clark had touched a vulnerable spot. Every man who wore a collar clutched at its ragged edges with one hand, and threw his hat in the air with the other.

The 'bus was filled with Sauger's guests on its way to town, and the imported band was not wasted. It was not equal to the "Wedding March," but Old Joe and his wife and her progeny rode in state to supper at the Shasta House quite as blissfully to the tune of "A Hot Time in the Old Town To-Night."

The Blizzard.*

BY H. B. ALEXANDER.

OLF-EATER was an old white-haired Indian. His broad dark face, seamed and wrinkled, was as calmly terrible as is the dread mask of the Sphinx, which the lances of generations of Arab vandals have failed to move. Wolf-Eater's cabin stood on a hill slope hardly a spear's throw from the site of the old Oto village on the Little Nemaha. On the top of the hill was a huge heap of bones — trophies of the gray wolves and coyotes which he had hunted out of the country for miles around.

One day I sat in front of the little cabin, watching the old man fashion the toy bows and pipes which he sold to the farmers for parlor ornaments.

"Wolf," I said (his name was so shortened by his white neighbors), "you have never told me why it was that when the Government took your people to the Reservation you stayed behind?"

For some moments Wolf-Eater did not speak. He dropped his work and gazed out over the prairies with that terrible, immutable Sphinx-like gaze that belongs to all eyes accustomed to peer across far plains. Finally he told his tale.

There was once a woman of the Otoes who was mother of twins. The girl she named Omona, the Rain-Wind, for to the mother she came as the fresh sweet wind that blows before a summer rain. And the boy also had a name, but it was changed before he left papoose straps.

The winter after the twins were born was a winter of many snows. One day Kah-i-nee — that was the woman's name — went over the hill from her village to cut willow twigs for baskets.

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The children were in the papoose hood on her shoulders. There was snow on the ground, but the day was sunny and clear.

By and by little gray clouds began to fly past through the sky, but Kah-i-nee did not notice them. She was busy with the willows. Then out of the North came the sudden blizzard wind. The light snow was swept from the ground and whirled about in a stinging, blinding cloud. Kah-i-nee dropped her willows and started for the village. She walked on and on, straining her eyes for the lights of the fires in the teepees, but she saw only the gray rushing snow. Soon she knew that she was lost, but she dared not stop walking lest she should freeze. She wrapped her blanket tighter about the twins and trudged on, always straining her eyes for the village fires.

It grew colder and colder. It was white-dark in the rush of the snow. She would have cried out, but the roar of the blizzard choked her voice. Suddenly she noticed a gray beast trotting by her side. She thought it was a village dog, and her heart leaped. Then it uttered its long wailing cry, and her heart stopped. There were many wolves that winter.

Kah-i-nee plunged on desperately through the storm, not daring to look around. When she did look there were two gray beasts trotting beside her. She tried to cry out, but the roar of the blizzard choked her voice. At times she heard the food-cry of the wolves beside her. She knew that there were three now. Soon there would be four, five — many! Soon they would feel strong as well as hungry.

A coyote snapped at her heels. With her stiffening fingers Kah-i-nee grasped the hatchet which she had brought to cut the willows, and struck one fierce blow. Then she ran on as fast as she could, stumbling against the wind. When she stopped for breath she was alone. She drifted on with the storm, still hoping to find the village. But almost immediately a gray wolf leaped up out of the darkness. Then another and another and another. The taste of meat had strengthened their hearts. They tore her blanket and skirts with their teeth, sometimes biting through to her flesh. Again Kah-i-nee struck with her hatchet, but it flew from her frozen fingers. This time the wolves were many and they crowded close. The battle spirit was in them; they had

tasted blood. With one hand Kah-i-nee drew the papoose hood to her breast, for her blanket was torn to shreds. With the other she seized her knife. She thrust it into the breast of a wolf that leaped up at her, but she could not draw it back. Then she knew that she must die. She tried to sing a death-song, but the yellow eyes and red throats of the wolves tied her tongue and the thought of Rain-Wind and the boy papoose choked down the words.

Then, suddenly, with one long moaning rumble the storm Wakanda swept away to the south. Kah-i-nee was on a hill within a spear's throw of the village. She could see the fires of the teepees shining through. The wolves had dragged her to her knees, but she tried to rise, fighting them off with her hand. Their teeth and the weight of the papoose hood held her down, for she was weak from exposure and wounds. Again Kah-i-nee saw that the Death Wakanda had doomed her, even in sight of her village. It was then that the twin papooses began to cry. A terrible thought came to the mother, and her heart broke. She might save one! Once more she tried to beat off the wolves and tried to rise. This time the papoose hood lay on the ground and her arm guarded but one child. Kah-i-nee stood up; the wolves no longer rushed upon her. With a scream which was like laughter she flew down the hill into the village and fell down dead at the door of her teepee.

The warriors ran out and drove the wolves from the stained and trampled snow.

Wolf-Eater paused, and picking up his knife resumed his carving, a little unsteadily, I thought.

"That was many winters past," he added. "Up there is the spot where Rain-Wind was left to the wolves to save the boy papoose" — indicating the heap of glistening bones.

Figures Went Wrong.

Something about Food that Saves one from Brain Fag.

That food can make or break a man is shown in thousands of cases. If one's work requires the use of the brain, the food must furnish particles that will build up the brain and replace the daily loss.

Many times people fall ill not knowing that the real cause of the trouble is the lack of the right kind of food to keep the body nourished.

As an illustration: A young man in Chatham, Va., says, "I have been employed for quite a time in a large tobacco warehouse here. My work required a great deal of calculating, running up long and tiresome columns of figures. Last winter my health began to give out and I lost from two to ten days out of every month.

"I gradually got worse instead of better. It was discovered that when I did work many mistakes crept into my calculations in spite of all I could do. It was, of course, brain fag and exhaustion. After dragging along for several months I finally gave up my position, for every remedy on earth that I tried seemed to make me worse instead of better and I had to force down what food I ate, hating to see meal time come.

"One day a friend said, 'Crider, do you know there is a food called Grape-Nuts that I believe is made to fit just such cases as yours?' The name rather attracted me and I tried the food. The delicious, sweetish taste pleased me and I relished it. In about a week my old color began to come back and I gained in strength every day. Finally I weighed and found I was gaining fast in flesh, and with the strength came the desire for work, and when I went back I found that my mind was as accurate as ever and ready to tackle anything.

"I now can do as much work as any man, and know exactly from what my benefit was derived, and that is from Grape-Nuts. I feel that it is but fair and just that my experience be known." E. P. CRIDER, Chatham, Va.

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Perfect in fit, never ragged or uncomfortable. Very convenient, stylish, economical. Made of fine cloth and exactly resemble linen goods. Turn down collars are reversible and give double service.

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NEW YORK CENTRAL LINES

A visit to the Falls is an object lesson in geography; an exhibition of landscapes that no painter can equal, and a glimpse of the latest developments of the industrial world.

A copy of Four-Track Series, No. 9, "Two Days at Niagara Falls," will be sent free, postpaid, to any address on receipt of a two-cent postage stamp, by George H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent, New York Central and Hudson River Railroad, Grand Central Station, New York.

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We make over 70 styles of rolling chairs and are fully equipped to make any special designs. Catalogue "B" illustrates and describes (free).

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CLASS PINS this style, with any 4 letters or figures and one or two colors of enamel, sterling silver, 25c. each; $2.50 a doz. Silver plated, 10c. each; $1.00 a doz.

Special designs in pins or badges made for any class or society at reasonable prices; send design for estimates. Catalogue free. **Bastian Bros., 52 Rochester, N.Y.**

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The most nourishing and easiest food to digest

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On account of sickness I was obliged to stop nursing my six-months-old baby, which was done in great fear, because the infant was very delicate.

After using various advertised foods for a certain time with no results, I thought of your Cook's Flaked Rice.

I must acknowledge it is a perfect substitute for mother's breast. My child is now one year old and is in the best of health.

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Former Chief of Clinic at Jefferson Medical College Hospital,
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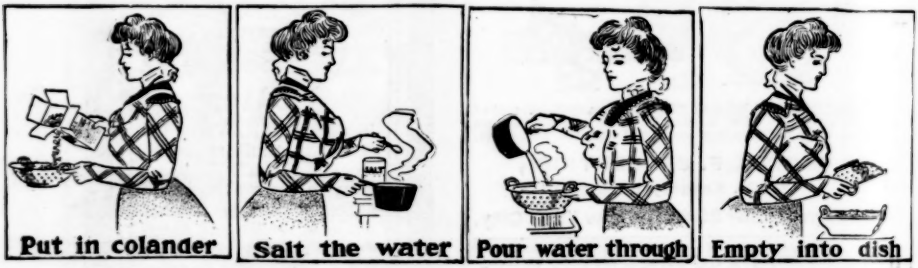
Chas. A. Hinks, M. D.,
Of the Board of Health,
Fall River, Mass.

To prepare for breakfast without cooking see illustrations



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Infants: One cup COOK'S FLAKED RICE, one quart water, boil ten minutes, add a pint of milk, pinch of salt, and a very little sugar, and strain.

Three-months-old child: Use double the quantity of COOK'S FLAKED RICE (two cups) and do not strain.

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Wretched pest, you have probably come direct from some hospital, garbage pail or stable, laden with filth and possibly disease germs. If I try to banish you by poison of any kind, you drop into the provisions and food, and I have made matters worse. There is only one way to get rid of you—**TO USE**

TANGLEFOOT

Sticky Fly Paper

It will catch and hold and cover you all over, and the germs and dirt that you are carrying, with a varnish from which you can never escape to trouble me **either living or dead.**

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This is the only preparation which is made expressly for

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You can apply it yourself. It preserves the wood, gives it a bright, natural finish; it prevents dust and dirt, does away with bugs and keeps the room clean, sweet and healthful. **WAXENE** is not a wax, wash or varnish, but an entirely new preparation—the only thing in the world that will prevent a floor from spotting, coloring or soiling with hot grease or water. **Every kitchen should have it.** WAXENE is especially adapted to oil cloths and linoleums.

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Massage, medicines, and developing appliances are dangerous and unsatisfactory. **H. & H. Bust Forms** are different from anything you have ever heard about, better than anything ever known.

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At the threshold of wedded life with its cares and responsibilities, what more appropriate could a bride consider than a box of the medicine that will keep the new family in perfect health.

"I took Cascarets myself and they are fine. I also have been giving them to my children with best results."—Mrs. Davis, 419 E. Capitol St., Washington.

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There are many physical disturbances of the bodily functions connected with the change from maidenhood to womanhood, and the health and wholesome life not only of the bride, the new wife and prospective mother, but that of the new generation that is to be, depend upon keeping all operations of the digestive canal regular and natural with Cascarets Candy Cathartic, the only medicine that will do it gently yet surely without grip or gripe.

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Best for the Bowels. All druggists, 10c, 25c, 50c. Never sold in bulk. The genuine tablet stamped C C C. Guaranteed to cure or your money back. Sample and booklet free. Address
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Tobacco does not pour out or spill, but is fed out automatically by alternately pressing and releasing mouth of Pouch between thumb and fingers.

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Mr. Hugo Horn, 344 E. 60th St., New York City, writes: "It reduced my weight 40 lbs. three years ago, and I have not gained an ounce since." Purely vegetable, and harmless as water. Any one can make it at home at little expense. No starving. No sickness. We will mail a box of it and full particulars in a plain sealed package for 4 cents for postage, etc.

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Flat-chested and unattractive women are quickly developed into commanding figures that excite wonderment and admiration.

A new and surprisingly effective home treatment has been discovered that enlarges the female bust at least six inches. Women who are not lacking in this respect will not be particularly interested, but those who by some unfortunate circumstance of health or occupation are deficient in this development will be very much fascinated by the peculiar prominence achieved by the treatment. It is called "Vestro" and is controlled by the well known Aurum Medicine Co.

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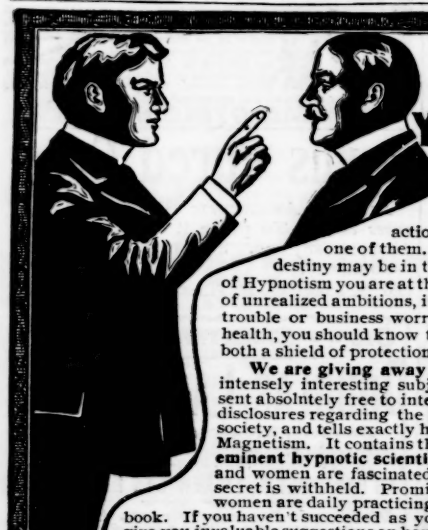

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Throws air equal to any $15 electric fan.

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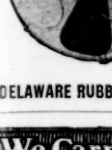

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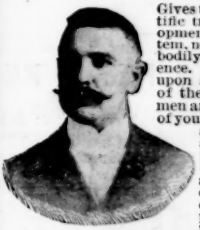

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A TRIAL PACKAGE FREE BY MAIL.

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Send for the free trial package to-day. It will brighten the rest of your life.

R·I·P·A·N·S

I had such a distressed feeling in my stomach and my head would ache every day regular. I had no appetite and when I did eat it lay heavy on my stomach. I got down-hearted and almost every week I had to go home once or twice from work. A friend advised me to try Ripans Tabules. I bought a package and started to take one whenever I felt bad or had the headache and after each meal for two months, and I can honestly say that I am thoroughly cured.

At druggists.

The Five-Cent packet is enough for an ordinary occasion. The family bottle, 60 cents, contains a supply for a year.

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DEATH TO HAIR—ROOT AND BRANCH

New Discovery by the MISSES BELL.

A Trial Treatment FREE to Any One Afflicted with Hair on Face, Neck or Arms.

We have at last made the discovery which has baffled chemists and all others for centuries—that of absolutely destroying superfluous hair, root and branch, entirely and permanently, whether it be a mustache or growth on the neck, cheeks or arms, and that, too, without impairing in any way the finest or most sensitive skin.

The Misses Bell have thoroughly tested its efficacy and are desirous that the full merits of their treatment, to which they have given the descriptive name of **"KILL-ALL-HAIR,"** shall be known to all afflicted. To this end a trial will be sent, free of charges, to any lady who will write for it, and say she saw the offer in this paper. Without a cent of cost you can see for yourselves what the discovery is; the evidence of your own senses will then convince you that the treatment, **"KILL-ALL-HAIR,"** will rid you of one of the greatest drawbacks to perfect loveliness, the growth of superfluous hair on the face or neck of women.

Please understand that a personal demonstration of our treatment costs you nothing. A trial will be sent you free, which you can use yourself and prove our claims by sending two two-cent stamps for mailing.

THE MISSES BELL

78 and 80 Fifth Avenue, New York

Internal Cleanliness
MEANS PERFECT HEALTH.

The J. B. L. Cascade Treatment insures both.

This wonderful treatment is in successful use by 150,000 people. It is endorsed and prescribed by eminent physicians. Its value cannot be demonstrated here, therefore we ask to send you, with our compliments, a book of facts. It tells the real secrets of how to acquire health and maintain it without the use of drugs. We will also give the names and addresses of Hospitals, Health Societies, Physicians and prominent people that have used and highly recommend it.

THE SUFFOLK HOSPITAL AND DISPENSARY,

PROF. CHAS. A. TYRRELL, 4 Charles St., Boston, Mass.

DEAR SIR—I will say that we have derived great benefit from the use of the "Cascade," and shall be only too glad to speak a good word for it whenever the opportunity offers.

Most truly yours, A. C. SMITH, President.

Address

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SUCCESS AWAITS YOU. The pathway to position and power is open to you. Dr. X. LaMotte Sage made a fortune out of his powers of Personal Influence.

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Will cure your cold and prevent La Grippe and Pneumonia. It is the "stitch in time" if you will take it.

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A safe and sure cure for Cholera Morbus, Colic, Dysentery and Cramp in the Stomach or Bowels. In all such cases it is invaluable.

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Will positively CURE Catarrh if properly and persistently used. It is a SURE preventative of Diphtheria and other diseases of the air passages.

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Indispensable for the toilet Will make the skin soft and smooth, removing pimples and sunburn. Warranted NOT to make the hair grow wherever applied. No toilet complete without this cream.

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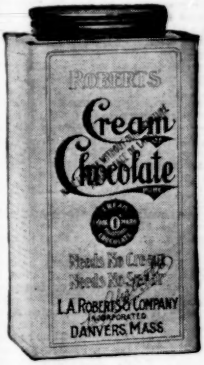

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Twenty-five Cents a Bottle.

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A Chance for Wealth

I told you last month that if you want an income for life you must get in on the ground floor of a business that is bound to be a winner. You must buy at the lowest notch. In your experience the good things of the business world have generally been snapped up before you could get near them. But are you quite sure that you knew a first-class thing when you saw it? Here, for instance, is a good one. Here is your chance to get in "on the ground floor." Put your odd dollars and cents into this—THE ODD CASH YOU ARE LETTING SLIP THROUGH YOUR FINGERS EVERY DAY OR SO—and make your money bring you back CASH DIVIDENDS. That's business, and sense, too. Success in business means selling a better article than anyone else for less money than anyone else, and when you have an article that is ALWAYS IN DEMAND, and when you hold THE SECRET OF ITS MANUFACTURE, you can just sit still AND SEE YOUR MONEY GROW.

I am managing a stock company to manufacture and sell the Flower Health Cigar, a cigar that is especially treated to NEUTRALIZE THE NICOTINE, making a clean, healthy smoke. The process by which the leaf is treated is the secret of this company. This cigar is made of pure Havana stock, has a fine full flavor, and can be sold at a good big profit at $1.00 per box of 25 cigars. Do you see any money in this? I do. Anything I touch turns to money. Suppose you follow my lead here—if there were no money in this article I should not be organizing a company to boom it from one side of America to the other.

FOR FIVE CENTS! A VERY HIGH-GRADE HAVANA CIGAR!

☞ Made of clear Havana stock, with Sumatra wrapper. No such quality has ever been sold for less than ten cents. But the Flower Health Cigar sells in box of 25 for $1.00, postpaid.

☞ You ask me why, if this is going to be such a wonderful money-maker, don't I make it a close corporation, hold all the stock, and keep all the profits? A very natural question, and a very short-sighted one. You will see why in a minute. The article offered, namely, a Health Cigar, will be consumed by thousands of people scattered all over the country. If they did not buy my cigars they would buy someone else's. But, suppose they become stockholders in this Cigar Company; is it not then evident that they will demand and consume these cigars in preference to any other? Surely it is, because they are then turning their expenditures actually into a source of profit to themselves. Therefore it is to all our interests to throw this stock open to the public.

☞ The Flower Health Cigar will be put upon the market early in May. Sold only by the box of 25 cigars; price $1.00 postpaid. If you smoke one box, I have you for life.

☞ Only one size:—medium. Only one quality:—best. Only one price:—$1.00 everywhere, postpaid.

☞ This cigar is especially recommended by physicians. It will not injure the heart. It will not affect the nerves. It will not destroy the appetite. It contains from 40 to 50 per cent. less nicotine than other cigars.

☞ It's a pretty good argument when a restaurant keeper dines at his own resort. It's a pretty good test of the merit of this cigar that I smoke them all day long myself, and don't want any other brand. There is not a ten-cent cigar on the market that can touch it.

☞ Read the announcement on page opposite, and, remember, IT'S ALL TRUE.

ADDRESS

The Flower Health Cigar Co.

A Smoke for Health

We Can't Keep This Stock Down! It's Going Up! Up!! Up!!!

Price per share (par value, $1.00) in the Flower Health Cigar Company is now 30 cents.

☞It will be up to 40 cents in June. BUY NOW.

☞During the month of April several thousand readers of New Thought invested in this enterprise at 20 cents per share, this being the rock bottom figure at which the stock was started.

☞I will pay spot cash 25 cents for every one of those shares bought by New Thought readers at 20 cents, receipts for which have been sent out from this office up to the date of the mailing of the May number of New Thought.

☞I will do this for two reasons: First, because it will give some of you an opportunity to clear 5 cents profit on every 20-cent purchase you have made; and, Second, because I WANT ALL THE STOCK I CAN GET at these figures.

☞Don't misunderstand me. I'm not a philanthropist. I AM A MONEY-MAKER. I am offering you about 300 per cent. profit on your last month's investment; but I shall sell the very stock I get back from you at 25 cents for 80 cents or $1.00 later. Take your choice.

☞As a rule when men or women buy stock they shut their eyes and jump. If they win, it's a wonder. If they lose they have no recourse. But I offer to The Black Cat readers my standing GUARANTEE as follows:

On December 1st, 1902, I will, if desired, refund to any purchasers of this stock the full price they have paid together with 10 per cent. interest.—Sydney Flower.

☞You can't get away from this guarantee. You can't find its equal. I have done business for years in the selling of books, etc. You have never found that our house defaulted from its rule of business—"money back if you are not satisfied." My guarantee is just as good as the bank—and better than some banks.

☞Orders received for not less than ten shares of stock and upward.

☞The headquarters of The Flower Health Cigar Company are now: The Majestic Building, Detroit, Michigan. Address all correspondence regarding The Flower Health Cigar to Detroit; not to Chicago. Address all orders for stock purchases, etc., to Detroit. This business will not be conducted from Chicago after the issuance of this number (May) of New Thought. In case any of your orders are addressed to Sydney Flower at Chicago, they will be transferred at once to Detroit, and you will therefore save us time and unnecessary work if you will remember to write to the Detroit house direct.

TEAR OFF THIS FORM AND FILL IN.

THIS FORM IS GOOD FOR MAY, 1902, ONLY.

Application for Shares of Stock in the Flower Health Cigar Company (Incorporated).

To SYDNEY FLOWER,
The Majestic Building, Detroit, Mich. Date.....

Enclosed please find $.....in payment for.....shares of stock (fully paid up and non-assessable) at the special price of 30 cents a share, as per your announcement in May number The Black Cat.

Signed.....

.....

.....

I will return you this Form receipted, and you will hold this as your receipt from me until your certificates of stock are issued and mailed you. Signed: SYDNEY FLOWER, Publisher of The New Thought Magazine, Chicago.

1312 The Majestic Bldg., Detroit, Mich.

A Summer Outfit FOR $5

WORTH $10

Comprising the following goods

2 Scarf Ties, Latest Designs
4 Pair Hose, Fancy or Black
2 Outing Shirts, Fancy
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2 Suits Summer Underwear
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3 Pair Cuffs

When ordering state size desired. Remit by Express or Postoffice order. Money refunded if goods are not satisfactory.

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Send for our new catalogue of dialogues and entertainments, free to any address.

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FREE TO YOU

Send Us 30 Words

Or more of your natural handwriting, and ten cents to cover cost of mailing, etc., and we will guarantee to give you a reading of your character and tell you the vocation you should follow to be most successful. We will also send you, postpaid, **a free copy** of a handsomely illustrated book, entitled **"Secret of Power,"** which thoroughly explains our famous **"Ki-Magi"** system of personal influence; gives simple but sure directions for increasing your salary or income; describes secret methods for developing personal magnetism, and tells how to acquire a powerful silent influence over whomever you will. Address

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Descriptive of the most interesting and healthful resorts to be found in the East are issued by the

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Southeast New Hampshire
Southwest New Hampshire
Fishing and Hunting

They will be mailed upon receipt of two-cent stamp for each book

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each containing 30 or more half-tone reproductions of New England Scenery (Size of views, 4x6 inches) *have been issued under following titles and will be mailed upon receipt of 6 cents each*

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FREE TRIAL PACKAGE sent by mail.

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[Mention this paper.]

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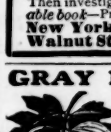
GRAY HAIR RESTORED



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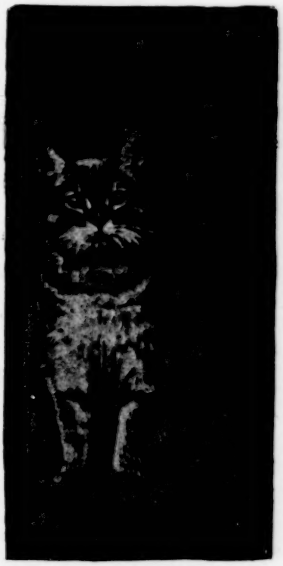

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